

'FAVOURITES' DANGER FOR WYCOMBE IN CUP FINAL

WYCOMBE Wanderers once again take on arch rivals Slough Town in the final of the Berks and Bucks Senior Cup, when the two teams meet at Wokingham Town's Finchampstead Road ground on Easter Monday (K.O. 3 p.m.).

This will be Wanderers' 22nd appearance in the final and the fourth year in succession they have come up against Slough's Rebels. At present the score stands at 2-1 to Slough but as a complete opposite to last year, Wanderers must start favourites to lift the trophy.

Last term Slough looked odds-on winners, having reached the Amateur Cup final the week before. Wycombe, however, pulled off something of a surprise by winning 1-0 with Keith Searle notching the only goal at Chesham.

This season, the boot is on the other foot. In a higher division, Wycombe are top of the Rothmans Isthmian League Division One whereas Slough, in Division Two, are second. The Blues also went one round better in the Amateur Cup and enjoyed a vastly superior F.A. Cup run.

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But this has proved Wycombe's undoing in the past. In both 1971 and '72, they possessed superior teams on paper but lost out both times, 1-0

at Marlow after a replay and 3-0 at Maidenhead. The underdogs, therefore, seem to turn up trumps in this competition.

Neither side's progress in the Allied Counties Cup has been spectacular this year. Slough struggled to overcome Wokingham 2-1 and then could only beat Abingdon Town from the Hellenic League 1-0 with a Tim Turl penalty. Wycombe had to go to extra time to beat Chesham in the semi-final at the Meadow.

Blues manager Brian Lee saw the Rebels tie with Abingdon and feels their side is not as strong as last year. But he added, "Slough will be motivated as we were last year."

Several of the Wycombe players are unlikely to need motivating for the final. Both Terry Reardon and Keith Mead were on the losing side for Slough last term and will be

Berks and Bucks Senior Cup preview by STUART EARP

wanting to overcome their former colleagues while Geoff Anthony, Peter Spittle and Barrie Davies have all played in a Wycombe shirt.

Whereas Slough are without a game on Saturday, Wanderers have a tough league match at Barking and team selection will depend on how the players come through that match. One player who is likely to be missing, though, is Derek Gamblin.

Brian Lee announced this week that Gamblin, who has been with Wanderers for five years, will be retiring at the end of the season to end a distinguished career in amateur football. Derek will only be playing in the Premier Midweek fixtures until the end of the season.

The manager explained: "Derek was disappointed at be-

ing left out of the side at Woking, having played against Sutton the previous Saturday. I felt his form was not good enough."

"It has been very difficult to test his knee injury this season with the floodlighting restrictions and I had to wait to try him out. At the moment he has agreed to be available for midweek matches.

"If he performs as he can, he is the best full-back we've got. My only regret is that I had him at the end of his career."

Gamblin, who travels up to Wycombe from Portsmouth where he runs a market gardening business, will not be training with Wycombe from now on.

Slough manager Roy Sleap

has already announced his team for the final. And he must be pinning much of his hopes on Geoff Anthony. Despite a niggling groin injury, Geoff came on as substitute for Wales last week and promptly scored the only goal of the game against Ireland. Not only that, on Monday he again grabbed the only goal to give the Rebels a 1-0 league win over Hampton at the Dolphin Stadium.

Anthony, Slough's top scorer with 15 goals, has been one of the key men behind the Rebels promotion bid this term. He will be linking up with Slough's other dangerman Tim Turl who is switching from right back to play at centre forward as David Kemp is ineligible, having played for Maidenhead. This means that John Beyer, who recently finished a 14 day

suspension, will return at left back.

Terry Male, who made his debut for Queen's Park Rangers football combination team in their 2-0 win over Swansea on Saturday, will probably be the substitute. Slough team: P. Spittle; S. Crosby, T. Watts, M. Cannon, J. Beyer; T. Williams, A. Davies, B. Davies; T. Brown, T. Turl, G. Anthony. Sub. T. Male or J. Hobbs.

When Tommy Lawrence resigned as Slough manager at the end of last season he took seven of the club's top players with him to Enfield. He confidently expected that these seven men — internationals Ian Wolstenholme, Ray Eaton, Alf D'Arcy, Keith Mead and Roger Day plus Micky O'Sullivan and Kenny Gaine — could bring Enfield immediate honours.

But Enfield have slumped this term. Slough, with only one sur-

vivor from last year's Amateur Cup final team in Anthony, look likely to stay among the honours.

This is mainly due to the work of new boss Roy Sleap, who was formerly with Slough and Hendon as a player and represented England several times.

With the help of new coach Tommy Tranter from Southall — who is also the manager of England Women's soccer team — and trainer John Graham, Sleap has formed a strong side which looks like winning promotion in their first season in Division Two.

Says Sleap: "It was by no means easy rebuilding the side and I am grateful to Geoff Anthony for his loyalty in staying with us. I have given him a new role this season and he has accepted more responsibility. He has responded by scoring far more goals than he did last term."

Off the field this season Slough have been busy planning their move to a new ground. Next season they leave the Dolphin Stadium to move to a new £150,000 ground in Wexham Road, Slough.

Slough have received a £30,000 grant from Slough council towards their new ground, plus £40,000 from the owners of the present ground — the Greyhound Racing Association — for the floodlights they are leaving behind. In addition they are to receive a loan from a brewery.